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## WORLD CURRENTS IN CHARITY THEORY AND PRACTICE

American farmers have long known the importance of importing the finest breeds of horses and cattle, of crossing strains and exchanging seeds. We are at least beginning to learn the value of cross fertilization in the realm of social practice. The only reliable basis for a law or method of administration, or for a social experiment, is knowledge of the experience of the civilized world. The conditions of modern life forbid provincialism in thinking and isolation of workers. The so-called self-made man who boasts of being "practical" is of all men frequently the most visionary schemer, because he lives on an island without communication with the continent and gives his petty vision validity for mankind. His ideas become dwarfs, like the hens described by Hawthorne to illustrate the danger of in-and-in breeding. Dr. Lester F. Ward uses the happy epithet, "the illusion of the near," to designate the mental myopia which comes from the habit of neglecting large general views of world movements. One who, climbing a mountain, loses himself in the tangles of brush and the gulches of the seamed flank, does not enjoy the beauty of the purple distance nor discover the order of the extended range. The central purpose of this article is to indicate the direction in which the apparently impulsive, emotional and chaotic efforts of philanthropy are tending, the outlines of a system of orderly approach to problems of management, and some of the unsettled problems which confront and halt us at the frontier of present experience.<sup>1</sup>

Under the rule of thumb and the régime of merely "practical" people the propagation of the feeble-minded stock went on unchecked, with its accumulation of miseries. It was when men began to mix theory with practice, and bring to bear the lessons of biology on the conduct of poor relief, that actual progress was made toward a rational, humane and effective policy of segregation of the unfit. It was a philosophical state secretary, a companion of men of science, who crystallized the working hypothesis of segregation

<sup>1</sup>It may be proper to give notice that the writer, and Dr. E. Muensterberg, City Councilor and Director of Poor Relief in Berlin, with a corps of other writers, have nearly ready for the press a volume which will present in English dress the essential features of public relief and private philanthropy in European and American countries.

into this statement: "By reason of years of study, we are coming to know what measures are preventive. These are practical and economical. Had they been known and could they have been adopted a generation ago, we should have a much smaller number of dependents to care for now. If, now that we know them, we utilize these preventive measures, there will be a great decrease of dependents in the next generation."<sup>2</sup>

The last century ripened the products of growths which root themselves in the period anterior to the Reformation. Poor relief, in the history of Christian peoples, has assumed three types, in response to changing social conditions: the voluntary and congregational charity of the early churches, before Constantine; the mediæval ecclesiastical methods of parishes, bishops, monasteries, orders and institutions; and the modern laic and political poor relief, supported by taxation and supplemented by individual and voluntary charity. The peoples of northern Europe, largely Teutonic and Protestant, have carried the system of public relief much farther than the Romance countries of southern Europe; but France and Italy have embarked upon the same voyage, urged by the same forces. In Germany the national feeling which created a central legislature at Berlin, a supreme court at Leipsic, and an imperial army and navy, could not brook the spectacle of a suffering citizen without right to relief in whatever state or commune he might fall into destitution, or, neglected by chance individual charity, be driven to steal. The imperial poor law and the workingmen's insurance measures are expressions of a civic conscience as well as of a consciousness of common interest. The creative thought does not seem to be merely to secure better administration, but to fulfill a national obligation. So long as there is no legal system, with a basis in universal taxation, multitudes of the destitute must be exposed to all the uncertain chances of liberality or neglect which characterize voluntary charity. The heroic fight of Thomas Chalmers<sup>3</sup> against the introduction of the outdoor relief system of England into Scotland was lost, and the principle of individualization by small districts, which he demonstrated by action, has never yet taken deep

<sup>2</sup>"Twelfth Report, Board of State Charities of Indiana," 1901, p. 18. Indiana has been fortunate in its secretaries for many years

<sup>3</sup>Thomas Chalmers, "The Christian and Civic Economy of Large Towns," published by Charles Scribner's Sons.

root in Great Britain, although it has triumphed in the German "Elberfeld system," and struggles for life and growth in the Charity Organization Society on both sides of the Atlantic. On the other hand, the obligation of the whole community to all its destitute members, which is the fundamental principle of poor laws, seems destined to be accepted by all the states of Christendom. The reaction against it in American cities is probably due to the general despair of securing honest and competent administration under the "spoils system" of municipal government; for outside the cities the wisdom of a poor law for outdoor relief is practically unquestioned. France, which long persisted in refusal to extend outdoor relief beyond the urgent cases of insanity and helpless infancy, has in recent years greatly enlarged its scope. The law of 1811 was modified in 1893 by placing medical relief under public administration. The next stage of development would seem inevitable, pensions for indigent aged people at cost of taxpayers, and definite provision for all who are indigent and helpless.<sup>4</sup>

Italy, united politically into one kingdom, has patiently sought to bring some kind of order out of the chaos of mediæval relief methods which filled her cities with beggars, and yet left the most miserable paupers of backward communes to starve. The endowed charities have been gradually brought under systematic control, dead branches have been pruned, hurtful and absurd methods have been corrected, and the foundation has been laid for a rational and modern relief system.

But if the state enlarges its activities on behalf of the destitute, it follows that there must be central regulation of the conditions under which relief may be granted. The state must lay the burden on local political divisions for direct administration and support. This involves, first of all, more stringent settlement laws. The movement of population from state to state and even from continent to continent is now so easy and cheap, and the inducement for forwarding undesirable citizens is so strong, that one community may find itself overwhelmed with a burden which rightly should be shared. Cities attract paupers and country relieving officers are prone to furnish free transportation to places where mercy is blind, people too busy to investigate, and where questions are not asked except

<sup>4</sup>Muensterberg, "*Verhandlungen der 21. Jahresversammlung deutschen Vereins fuer Armenpflege und Wohlfahrtigkeit*," 1901, p. 18.

by inveterate organizationists, that tribe so hard of heart. One form of barrier is the immigration law against importation of European defectives and Chinese laborers with a pauper standard of life. Even Russia has been compelled to resort to settlement laws to prevent congestion of pauperism in centres of population. Germany, since 1870, under a unified imperial code, has reached a fairly satisfactory solution. In the United States, which has felt so rich that it could endure almost any abuse, the evils of unregulated migration of paupers are becoming so manifest as to call for more efficient measures. Massachusetts and New York may be taken as examples of old communities with inherited laws and traditions of ancient English customs, and with a long experience of their own, and these have developed complicated settlement regulations, though of different types. The ideas of the eastern states travel slowly westward, as cities grow and the pressure of pauperism is more sensibly felt. So long as the hardships of the plain and of a pioneer life held feeble folk at a distance the states of the West were not impelled to fix severe conditions of settlement. But when Atlantic cities shipped the children of immigrants, even of paupers and criminals, into their villages, instead of sending them back to Europe, or caring for them at home, the states, one after another, passed laws requiring at least security for their selection and supervision. So long as there was free public land a large population was desired, and quality was not so much a question. Malaria and revolvers, in certain districts, have represented natural and artificial selection, and settlement laws are gradually added to help nature. While the laws of settlement in Colorado are still quite mild, the invasion of consumptives has led to a discussion which will doubtless result in more adequate protection.

The more complete organization of civil relief does not imply the suppression of private and ecclesiastical benevolence, but only a better understanding and division of labor, a demarcation of spheres of influence and activity. The German Evangelical Inner Mission, for example, the rapid multiplication of English philanthropic enterprises, and the devotion of means and personal service in America, show that a public system has strict limitations; and that the same civic conscience which supports a poor rate also calls for personal and associated efforts too delicate for the rude and cumbrous machinery of the state. The same tendencies are at work

in Scandinavia, Holland, Scotland and elsewhere. Many of these agencies are not under ecclesiastical control, as the Red Cross Society; but the church has been awakened to take to heart its ancient task of ministry to the poor.

It is true that these two systems have grown up somewhat independent of each other, and sometimes there is conflict or competition between them. Even German municipal councillors may be heard to complain that the church parishes, especially those with large funds, do not co-operate with each other or with the city, in an harmonious plan of helping the poor. In the United States, where the horror of bureaucracy is so strong, we have reconciled ourselves to the tyranny and corruption of bossism and spoils, evils unknown in German administration of poor relief. In many places our efforts to secure information to which every taxpayer has a moral and legal right, are often treated with that insolence which is evidence that investigation is both hated and feared. In many places no statistics of value are kept, and original records are burned at frequent intervals on the plea that "unfortunate citizens in need of help should not have their names kept in a public record." In German cities the feelings of dependents are far more respected than here, and the administration is practically effective through voluntary and unpaid visitors, carefully selected by the authorities.

The Charity Organization Society is therefore called for, not only in Great Britain and America, but even in countries like Germany, where its principles are actually embodied in the public system. Indeed the organization movement is as wide as civilization. It is an effort to synthesize the separately evolved agencies of state, church and private associations.

Another illustration of the tendency to federation of philanthropy, to form "trusts" of charity, may be taken from a recent organization of child-saving societies in the Middle West. The belief that the best place for a normal dependent child is not in a large "cold storage" establishment, but in a warm and real family home, has everywhere taken deep root. As the number of homeless children increases with population, and as neighborhood ties are broken up by the incidents of a shifting urban life, the necessity for organized effort to find new homes, select them carefully and supervise them thoroughly, has become generally apparent. Even where the state, as in Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota, has

provided a temporary school and placing-out agency, with admirable administration, popular sentiment favors the support of voluntary associations, and in most states this form of help is alone in the field. Independent in origin, associations of the same type have sprung up in the vast plain drained by the Mississippi River. Some of these societies were admirably managed from their experimental beginnings, while others were conducted by persons who had inadequate conceptions of the responsibilities they were assuming. Occasionally downright dishonesty has been discovered. There are still very large areas, especially in the South, in which many little waifs are thrust into poorhouses and even jails, and are without organized means of placing out the helpless and homeless. The necessity for federation, in order to correct abuses, guide action and enlarge the field of labor, became manifest to many persons, and these formed the National Children's Home Society on the basis of a former society. The ideals of this organization have by no means been reached, but already the semi-annual meetings of executive officers for discussion, criticism, personal acquaintance and propaganda have clarified thought, brought essential regulative principles into light and clear expression, corrected abuses, prevented unwise enterprises, adjusted differences, trained new workers, and extended agencies into destitute fields. A table of statistics published by this society May 31, 1902, showed the results of work done in twenty-four states: Total number of children cared for from beginning, 18,528; children now under supervision, 10,704; number of children placed in families for the first time, during the year reported, 1,900; expenditures, \$193,768; value of lands, buildings and funds, \$151,070. The figures show how large a work can be done with little dead capital.

As persons of various occupations, trades, arts and professions federate and confer together with advantage to themselves and the public, inspire professional spirit, improve methods, so charitable workers and students are forming associations in local, state, national and even international societies, for kindred purposes.

This consideration brings us to a topic over which discussion grows hot in the United States, the problem of state supervision and control of public and even private philanthropy and relief.<sup>5</sup> It is easily shown that we have here one phase of a world movement.

<sup>5</sup> See "N. Y. State Library Bulletin 72," March, 1902.

The agitation, excitement and even the irritation of the debate will conduct us toward a sober and profitable consideration of the experience of civilized nations, especially of those where the science of administration has been more fully developed than with us. So great is the interest in this subject that the National Conference of Charities and Correction appointed a special committee to study and report for discussion at the Atlanta meeting, although a very strong debate was heard last year at Detroit. And the National Prison Association will also discuss a report of a special committee on the same theme at Louisville in September. In Iowa and Minnesota the legislatures have followed the example of Kansas and Wisconsin in substituting a paid board of control for an unpaid board of supervision. New York, New Jersey and Nebraska are at this time weighing the arguments for both plans, and unity is far from realization.

Some illustrations from the older countries may serve to light the way to secure ground. In a study by the present writer, which is now in the hands of the public printer at Washington, the documents relating to central administration of penal and correctional establishments will be collected and made accessible to readers of English; and there it will be shown with considerable detail that in establishments of this class the necessity for central control has been everywhere legally recognized, except in the United States. In Germany alone there is no such system of public supervision and reports in relation to outdoor relief, except in Bavaria. This defect seems due to the fact that the municipal relief system has reached a high degree of perfection, is based on a common poor law, and is so independent of voluntary charity that no serious demand is made for state supervision of administration. It is admitted, however, by high authorities, that not only rural relief but even urban administration would often be improved by the requirement of inspection and uniform reports of statistics. Such inspection and even control is carried very far in Great Britain. The bitter and costly experience under the lax methods previous to 1834, taught the English people a lesson which they have not yet forgotten. The local authorities have, indeed, much responsibility and freedom of initiative, but over England and Wales the Local Government Board exercises control under a general law, and a similar system is organized both in Scotland and Ireland. For the inspection of care of children



and families women are frequently appointed, and with excellent results.

In Austria state commissions have inspectors of local relief officers and they secure uniform, impartial, and efficient administration of the law. Local officials there as everywhere, as a rule, lack training, reliability and accuracy, as compared with central officers, but they have the advantage of intimate knowledge of the conditions in their own neighborhoods. By combining central supervision with local responsibility for details, the best results are obtained. In Switzerland, Canton of Berne, under a recent law, a corps of inspectors keeps the central board of supervision in touch with district relieving officers. In Belgium a commission reports in terms of enthusiasm on the results of state supervision, and calls the members of the staff of inspectors "apostles of beneficence." France, true to its traditions of central control, extends its state administration as far as government relief extends. These indications of tendencies of European countries bring to light certain principles which seem to lie at the basis of the discussion in which our people are now engaged.

Those who imagine that the most perfectly disciplined administrators in the world permit themselves to execute law exempt from the influence of competent citizens would do well to study the numerous organizations which help to bring government into touch with daily life. The German imperial and state governments have long since developed various devices for the representation of interests and of expert knowledge, both in the preparation of legislation and the execution of laws, as in relation to colonies, emigration, boards of trade, insurance, public health, welfare of workingmen, postal service, agriculture, railroads, and stock raising.<sup>6</sup>

If, under the most scientific systems of administration, both special commercial and public interests require representation and hearing, how much more true is this of wards of charity, the insane, the imbecile, the homeless child, who are incompetent to plead for themselves.<sup>7</sup>

The direct and measurable effects of simple supervision and publicity, without legal control, are seen in the statistics of out-

<sup>6</sup> "Die Beiräte für besondere Gebiete der Staatstätigkeit im deutschen Reiche," etc., von Dr. Paul Hacker, *Zeitschrift für die Gesamte Staatswissenschaft*, Ergänzungsheft IV, 1903.

<sup>7</sup> Address of Dr. Charlton T. Lewis on State Supervision, Charities, March 21, 1903, p. 278.

door relief by the township trustees of Indiana. There the local officials are required to send to the state board of charities a report of every family which receives aid. These reports are tabulated, set in contrast and published. The cost to the public has been diminished, the poorhouses have not been crowded, and the more careful scrutiny of individual cases has unquestionably led to an improvement of their moral habits on which permanent welfare depends.<sup>8</sup>

First of all we need to make clear to ourselves the distinction between state control of direct administration and organization of public opinion as to policies and results. In the controversy much confusion has been introduced into papers and hot speeches by failure to note the difference between these aims of constitutional and popular governments. Dr. F. H. Wines brought out the point at Detroit and it ought to be insisted on to the end. Public control of administration must be in the hands of salaried experts; agencies of public opinion should not be paid, unless for actual expenses, and they need not be professionals. In our judicial experience we recognize the difference between the judge and the ordinary jurymen. In municipal administration we have salaried engineers and expert accountants on one side, and representatives of citizens on the other. In most state and national affairs the same distinction is familiar. A democracy is competent to judge of policies and results, if it has means of information; and it will not long tolerate gross evils if they are simply brought to light. But in the work of actual administration a body of professional salaried men is required, men who specialize their work and give themselves wholly to it. In the social enterprises of public relief, indoor and outdoor, the same distinction should be clearly and frankly admitted.

If we consider the reasons for providing a legal means of educating and expressing public sentiment about policies and results they may be summarized in the form of maxims of experience. Helpless invalids, insane patients, paupers in remote poorhouses, feeble-minded persons, cannot defend themselves, cannot reach the organs of influence, cannot plead in courts of equity for themselves. A humane society will provide for a hearing in the forum of publicity. History teaches us that where abuses are possible they will

<sup>8</sup>"The Experience in Indiana," by Amos W. Butler. *Proceedings of the National Conference of Charities and Correction*, 1902.

occur; that professional officers are not to be trusted to inspect and report on their own conduct in office and be permitted to exercise irresponsible power. When officials resent interference "from outside" the alarm should be sounded from every home. A democracy cannot dictate a system of medical practice, but it can judge of a policy when its fruits are made known in comparative tables of sickness and mortality. The great public is awkward enough, and sometimes foolish, but it is competent to see the difference between bad and good management of an institution by comparing the use made of severity and violence to secure order, and in the increase or decrease of disease due to filth or neglect. Therefore, granting, as the present writer does, that state boards of control, properly organized, are demanded by the teachings of world experience, it must also be insisted that this concession does not touch the question of "supervision." Boards of control are salaried administrators, and if kept in office long enough may become experts. But when infallibility is claimed for them, with audacity of assertion and paucity of proof, we must insist again on the argument that no body of officials has a moral right to pass on their own conduct of affairs. The fact is that we already have boards of control in all the states, perhaps too many of them; and the new movement is simply one to consolidate them, pay them, and secure the advantages of economy and responsibility which are likely to result from the proposed arrangement. It is probable that a board of control for each great group of public institutions, penal, sanitary, educational, charitable, agricultural, etc., may prove to be a wise measure, and experiments are already on trial to test this hypothesis. But the intelligent friends of the poor and helpless must hold together in making the demand that the voluntary service of intelligent and benevolent representatives of the public shall also be legally recognized; and boards of control should be the first to insist on this principle.

There are, of course, various methods of organizing for free and independent inspection of public administration. Thus in the English prison system a board of visitors has considerable influence. On the continent of Europe the "societies of patronage," for aiding prisoners and their families, have long exercised a wholesome influence on penal establishments and legislation and more than once have broken through the crust of custom which often prevents the

growth of ideas in officialdom. In German public charity the voluntary "honor office" is a large factor and the bureaucracy, if they have any distrust or envy, seem to be successful in hiding their feelings. In our own country the boards of county visitors in certain states have already accomplished much good, have exposed abuses, have wakened sleepy officers, and have collected facts of immense importance to legislatures. The New York Charities Aid Association is a typical example of an independent society, legally recognized, and exercising vast influence. Various prison societies belong to the same type.

The dangers which may be expected, especially in America, from boards of control without legal and capable agencies of supervision, are such as the following: A board which inspects, audits and passes on its own deeds, without check, soon comes to feel that it is infallible and omniscient; or, if it escape this foible, it is more than human. One who is never contradicted may be excused if he rapidly acquires profound confidence in his own judgment. They soon feel the warm glow of satisfaction in the use of unobstructed power. It is a rare absolutist sovereign who begs for a constitution. Strong men like Bismarck chafed at the delays of parliamentary questioners. It is asserted already by men near the heart of secrets that there are gentlemen who rather enjoy seeing superintendents of asylums and hospitals, party leaders, legislators, office seekers, contractors, and even state university presidents cooling their heels in the anteroom of the star chamber of a state board of control. Even if the testimony is questioned this result is inevitable.

Secrecy, the cloud which hides all perils and abuses, is unavoidable with a board of control without a legal method of supervision independent of it. Reports on forms provided by statute are deceptive; there is no substitute for the inspection of a living person. Partisanship is charged, for the "bipartisan" board is by no means synonymous with "nonpartisan" when it comes to redeeming ante-election pledges by the party in power. Such are the fears of most students of the situation, and the fact that the new boards have really rendered important services during the short trial does not quiet anxiety.

It follows from the principle of social interest and solidarity of responsibility that private charities must ultimately be subjected to governmental supervision and control. This suggestion will be

resented by those who have been brought up in the frontier conditions of a new country, where distance of social atoms reduced friction and collision. But with the growth of urban life, and the consequent intimacy of contact between persons and societies, more regulation becomes necessary. We are defining new crimes with every legislature, and soon we shall bring immoral and wasteful philanthropy under legal control. Some states have already made progress in that direction, beginning with those associations which receive subsidies. It is true that such control is often a mere pretence, and at the best public inspection is not infallible, even with national banks and interstate commerce boards. But this is true of administration generally in American cities and commonwealths, and the remedy lies in improving the service, not in inviting anarchy to remain. The perils of inspection by private organizations is illustrated in a recent assault upon one of the best known representatives of charity organization by an irresponsible money gatherer, whose methods of sponging on benevolent persons had been exposed and thwarted. In the absence of public supervision of alleged philanthropy private firms of detectives have derived considerable income from reporting to business men in regard to persons and associations who wish to be famous for goodness at the expense of the dear public. Evidently where the owner of an automobile must take out a license before he can use the streets for his pleasure, some protection ought to be given generous people against the legion of well-intentioned sentimentalists and sharp knaves who infest the offices and homes of busy philanthropists with pleas which are plausible but without foundation in reason. It is plain enough to a student of world movements in charity that private agencies may be so conducted as to increase the number of dependents and throw heavier burdens upon taxpayers; as the history of beggars in Italy and France clearly proves, not to speak of innumerable facts in our own cities. Thus it is not uncommon for churches to support a family of dependents until they have remained long enough to acquire a legal settlement and then cast them upon the local government to care for by outdoor and indoor methods, perhaps throughout generations. The first to welcome state inspection should be those generous benefactors whose methods are so wise that publicity would give them distinction and whose generosity is so splendid that its record would add lustre to state history. But inspection and regu-

lation by the incompetent appointees of the spoils system would not yield desirable results, and the civil service reform is as vital in this connection as in relation to municipal government and state institutions.

It is said to the reproach of workers in charity that they do not go to the root of the evil and that they are satisfied to mend and patch where radical measures are required for general and permanent relief. Socialists and special reformers are particularly impatient with the entire range of philanthropic activity. But at the present hour the demands of democratic sentiment and of the long look of science are heard and heeded in the ranks of those who come nearest to the lowest stratum of human misery. Intelligent visitors among the poor are also dissatisfied with alleviating measures where anything more satisfactory is possible, but under any system the call for relief will always be heard and make its appeal to social sympathy. The independent and self-respecting workingmen emblazon on their banners, "not charity, but justice," and they organize to build the strongest dam possible against the inflowing flood of pauperism. Their struggle for a standard of life is the fight for civilization itself, and is not a mere class contest. Universal suffrage means death to progress, unless the great majority of men have that taste for culture which comes with a taste of culture. If the pauper spirit were not detested by the multitude we might easily return to a lax administration of poor laws such as brought England to the verge of bankruptcy before the reforms of 1834. Scientific charity arrives at the same conclusion by another route. If a very large body of the population were trained by necessity to live upon alms, the taint of degeneration would poison national life. Parasitism breeds moral decay.

"Constructive and Preventive Philanthropy"<sup>9</sup> is the significant title of a recent book which gives numerous and interesting illustrations of measures which show the influence of modern science on benevolent enterprise: savings banks, playgrounds, baths, gymnasiums, outings to the country, clubs, industrial training. But the author of this book opens a small window into a future of preventive agencies which at present scarcely rise above the horizon,—the insurance of workingmen against economic ruin from accidents, sickness, and the feebleness of old age. He speaks with natural and

<sup>9</sup> By Joseph Lee. The Macmillan Company., 1902.

proper hopefulness of those rare and suggestive experiments made by some of our great corporations, and he adds: "It is said that one-seventh of the railroad employees of the country are members of the insurance departments." But why only one-seventh? Since it is unquestionably good for them, why not all employees, in all occupations where income is close upon the margin of need, as in Germany? So important has this subject of preventive methods seemed to many active workers among the poor, that the National Conference of Charities and Correction in 1902 took the following action: "The Executive Committee recommends to the National Conference of Charities and Correction, without committing the Conference to any particular system, in advance of investigation, to provide for the appointment of a commission of seven persons to consider plans of so-called insurance for wage-earners in case of accident, sickness, invalidism and old age, with special reference to their effects on dependence and crime, the commission to be continued for at least three years before making its final report." The president of the conference appointed on this commission, F. L. Hoffman, S. G. Smith, John Graham Brooks, Amos W. Butler, Frank A. Fetter, E. T. Devine and Charles R. Henderson. This commission has mapped out an investigation and divided the topics among them, and invites contributions of information.

In Germany the value of such universal and compulsory insurance is as well recognized among charity workers as the value of compulsory school attendance. The prospect of securing adequate protection of this kind by individual savings or by private and voluntary initiative is about as hopeful as that of universal education without required attendance and public schools.

It may not be out of place in this survey to suggest a few of the problems suitable for the studies of young graduates. Thus it seems very desirable to investigate at close range the question how far and in what ways various methods of poor relief affect the rate of wages in certain industries. The best results can be reached only by a wide and prolonged investigation by the permanent census bureau of the general government. But private students might make experimental local studies which would help formulate the wider investigation of the government and train agents for its service. In the history of poor relief the influence of grants in aid of wages has been disastrous in the extreme, and there are many

kinds of evidence in the records of city and state offices which reveal a similar tendency even in America. But we have not as yet adequate statistical data for a judgment, although the teaching of history compels us to look for precisely the same results which have followed lax administration in similar situations. Unfortunately, history does repeat itself where forces of the same kind are working on the same materials.

It is specially in connection with what the Webbs call "parasitic industries" that we may first look for such effects of well-known causes. There are certain branches of department stores of a low grade and sweated industries, where we may find the disastrous influence of the habit of living partly on wages and partly on public or private relief. Local studies have already made fairly clear the connection between this situation and the increase of pauperism. An investigation on a large scale is required to eliminate special causes and offer a demonstration which will convince practical men.

The Consumers' League is urging with a tragic array of concrete illustrations the influence of the employment of children in factories, street occupations and mercantile establishments. At present the benevolent public tolerates this robbery of child life, this suppression of play and education, this obstacle to physical development and school training, for the profit of a few who do not propose to support those whose vitality they have despoiled before maturity was reached. Adults, the natural breadwinners, are displaced by their own offspring and even become accustomed to exploiting them as sources of income. This is getting something for nothing, and is permitted only because the public have not the facts spread before them in the bare ugliness of truth. The only investigations which impress the mind and conscience of the busy, kindhearted world are local in character. Imported statistics are like charged mineral water left in an open vessel; for the sparkle and zest are volatile. Facts lose their momentum if projected very far across state lines.

This remark applies to the bearing of drink habits on pauperism. The temperance reformers have dulled the hearing of the people with their sensational din; and yet they have, with all their exaggeration, been unable to find adequate language to express the fact. It is now difficult to secure a hearing on the subject, for we have supped full of horrors. Local studies, conducted by methods as accurate as those



of Wines, Koren and others for the Committee of Fifty, would be very impressive and might serve to prick the jaded attention of many communities, especially if, with an accurate display of the casual connection between drink and tax burdens, there could be proposed measures of improvement which are immediately practicable.

To numerous graduates of our universities we may commend another field for local study,—families and tribes of the degenerate stocks like the “Jukes,” “Smoky Pilgrims” and “Tribe of Ishmael.” The archives of secluded country almshouses in many parts of the land have the materials for studies which, even if they did not at once advance knowledge in general, might serve important practical and local interests. The records of institutions for the feeble-minded have not begun to yield up all they might under the guidance of trained investigators; and it is only as one deals with particular facts of concrete reality in the philosophic spirit and method that he comes into a world current of law.

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